What half is it of me rearranged

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by ofermod

Summary

Will called Hannibal with the warning and he actually fled, leaving everything behind. The bloodshed of Mizumono never happened. Just when days have started to blend into one another, some months after their parting, Will received an envelope advertising Italian fishing gear. The return address said: PO box in Florence.
An epistolary flirtation between Hannibal and Will.

Notes

Title from "Can I Believe You" by Fleet Foxes. Violence descriptions are all in the tone of the show. Hannibal and Will's relationship is the opposite of wholesome and healthy, just FYI.

Huge thanks for beta reading and amazing suggestions to hoodedmiho and Darca. You're absolute stars 💛

See the end of the work for more notes

The envelope looked innocent, with neat fishing gear graphics printed all over it. The letter inside had nothing to do with fishing, the paper was heavy and felt expensive. It was written on a typewriter. Its weight literally and metaphorically palpable as Will turned it over in his fingers—no handwriting, no discernible signature. But he was sure it was from Hannibal.

Dearest Will,

I have very few regrets in my life, but this might be the biggest one yet. That night, long ago from a different life—did you step into the kitchen, expecting I'd still be there? Hoping to see me—bound and caged or dripping with victory, my foes slain at my feet? I wonder.

I regret not seeing your face then. I could have left you with a smile.

Maybe betrayal and promise can be two sides of the same coin.

X

***

It's good to know you're alive.

Do you miss our conversations? Even this far away, surrounded by all things finest and grandest? Somehow, I can't shake off a feeling that I never stopped having those conversations, but only now say the words out loud. Out loud with the slow staccato of keys. Feels profane to type them on a computer, almost rude—considering the delicate texture of the typewriter whispering your soft poison. Poisoning my solitary darkness, even from this far away. I hate to come across as rude, I know how that irks you.

A betrayal? That night was a zero-sum game, my goodbye was the only clean break. Almost clinical, but—admit it—the only viable one.

Will

P.S. Forgive my foregoing the salutation, it seemed only appropriate to plunge right into it—carry on with the conversation, as it were.

***

Dearest Will,

I confide in the piano the things that I sometimes want to say to you. My harpsichord was left behind, but the piano is more than good enough. It has the quality of a memory and these days have all such quality. The things that I want to say to you—they bubble and slosh with the melody, beating against the brim, but never spill. So let me spill my—as you so aptly called it—soft poison to you.

I am indeed surrounded by all things finest, basking in the silent beauty of objects. This shouldn't be a torment and yet it feels like it sometimes. Almost seems like entombing myself among art won't give me the life I long for. I certainly miss your particular brand of rudeness which, I now must confess, I recognize to only be able to tolerate when it's coming from you. The other day I met someone who vaguely reminded me of you, even some of your mannerisms echoed in his movements. What he thought to be playfully antagonistic, I found vile and discourteous. You poisoned my darkness too, Will. My compassion for you is most inconvenient.

I'm glad we have the opportunity to dissect our feelings on paper without the danger of physical proximity. Or maybe you feel differently? Do you still fantasize about killing me?

X

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I'm imagining the hardship you must be experiencing, probably munching on truffles and oysters, sipping unspeakably expensive wine. Are you lying prostrate on the cold stone floor of some particularly sumptuous baroque church and occasionally self-flagellate? I can see you doing that but then I realize you would have to recognize the need to atone. I can imagine a lot of things, but not you experiencing remorse.

My "particular brand of rudeness"—I laughed out loud at this. If I heard you say this in person, I would have been sure I misheard you. Seeing this impressed into the paper feels like you tore it out of yourself by force and reluctantly trusted me to witness it. The fact that I poisoned your darkness as well is almost unbelievable to me, but thinking back on everything that happened—it all falls into place. Solitary in our respective wells of darkness, now solitary no more. Or maybe now in a different way. Perhaps you shouldn't stroke my ego with such stories, who knows what it shall breed in me.

I never heard you play an instrument, but my mind concocts and distills an approximation of your confessions. Are they grim? Are they light-hearted? Are your fingers on the piano echoing your revenge fantasies? Would they be different on your harpsichord? I wonder what that farewell smile would have felt like. That being said, I am also glad the paper is here to bear my punches. You know my fantasies quite well by now, I'm surprised you'd still need to ask.

The other day I scraped my hand against coarse wood, drew some blood. Felt it flow warmly over my skin. I went through the motions then, absent-mindedly, thinking back to that one evening in your office. That night, I put my bloody hands in yours and you washed them, bandaged them, whispering your soft poison into my ears and my wounds. You said most of what we do and believe is motivated by death—were you in that moment too? The death I fantasized to inflict on you?

Yes. I fantasize about that still. Between these letters and my memories from that previous life, it's all I can do. If you were anyone else, I'd fear baring myself like this, but between us? There's hardly anything left to bare at this point.

Awaiting more of your sweet poison,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

Just a few paragraphs of your letter and you already painted a picture so morbidly debauched, I applaud your range. If I could enter your head and walk the halls of your mind like I do in museums here—I would. To see myself *in flagrante* as you see me, self-flagellating and cleaning your wounds and playing my grim fantasies on the piano and harpsichord.

There are no revenge fantasies, not anymore. Disappointment still lingers in my heart, but any desire for revenge evaporated with time. The only self-flagellation I seem to practice is writing to you and baring my heart to you as well. I wanted you to see me—all of me and now I must reap the sows of that desire. I keep coming back to what I hoped for both of us, the future I fantasized about but which can never happen now. There will be other futures, but I'm still mourning that particular one. If life is a sentence—a collection of letters, words, and spaces—then our death is the punctuation to that sentence. If you change a period to an exclamation mark, it has a way of changing everything that happened before it. You haven't just exchanged a period for an exclamation mark. You deleted most of the words, leaving me mid-sentence. Perhaps you saved some people from having their sentences broken by a period. But now I must wait for you to finish the sentence.

I am well aware of the intimacy of cleaning one's wounds. That moment has a particular spot in my mind palace as it marked an incredible transformation for both of us. Sacrifice and blood—his, yours, and mine. The most elegant of all the triads. What motivated me in that moment is hard to pinpoint exactly, but death is always there, don't you think?

Everyday in this beautiful city, I walk the streets, sit in front of old masters, render my ailings and longing onto paper. My musical confessions are transient and sending you sheet music would not give justice to the feelings behind them. A recording would be thankless and clinical. Thus, I put one of my most recent fantasies on paper for your viewing pleasure.

Contrary to your convictions about me, I have strived to atone. Maybe not for what you'd imagine, but I have. To atone is to exist day after day, spiting death with every day well-lived. And I intend to keep spiting her for a long time.

Let me stroke your ego even further, then. I don't know all your fantasies. Tell me about them. I want to know everything.

X

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Your art wounds me. And yet, I appreciate the metaphor in your drawing. Is it a metaphor? Between us, it's sometimes hard to tell where metaphors turn literal. Isn't it a bit crude, though? Me, pierced with arrows like Saint Sebastian? Which one of your fantasies is it? The morbid or the debauched sort? I appreciate the attention to all anatomical details at least.

You say you want to enter the halls of my mind. But we have been walking them together since day one. If I didn't know better, I'd compare you to a particularly stubborn stray who never got the hint and even when shoved out the door, still just sat there in silent determination. I wouldn't dare to make that comparison. I sometimes wish to banish you—had wished quite violently in the past—but there is no permanent way of ridding myself of you any more.

This morning, I read in the paper that when you blush, the lining of your stomach turns red too. Now I can see you slicing my abdomen and touching my viscera like an *à rebours* doubting Thomas. Seeking pure beauty of the flesh in all its glorious textures. What would you say to make my insides blush? I'm not sure what *I'd* say, if our places were reversed in this scenario. Another deliciously morbid scene from the theatre of my mind, since you asked so nicely for another slice of that particular pie.

In case you were wondering about the mundane lives of those whose punctuation you oh-so-graciously left intact, they're all well. I'd prefer it stays that way. They can't forget you, but for lack of other choices, letting you go is what remains. Except for me, I suppose. No such choice is left for me.

I need some time to sift through all the futures laid out before us. I'd think there aren't many choices to finish the sentence, but perhaps the darkness is still too thick to wade through it.

Undecidedly,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

Your words are almost as intoxicating as the faint hint of your aftershave lingering on the paper. Teasing, on the verge of delightfully rude. Funny, how irrational the associations in our minds are, particularly those pertaining to our sensory memories. I often catch hints of this aftershave—I dare not speak its name—in places around me. I must admit my stomach lining must be blushing at the memories, no words required. Which should sufficiently answer your question. It's both morbid and debauched.

I thought you'd appreciate my St Sebastian and the blurring of metaphors, but evidently something has struck too close to home. Tell me, Will, have you burnt the sketch right away? Did you watch it disappear into the flames, inhaling the smoke? Or did you tuck it away into a dark drawer? The wounds are mutual, I assure you. Each and every one of them has a counterpart on my soul.

Perhaps another sketch would make it up for that ‘crude’—as you insist—metaphor. Pencil cannot give justice to the violent chiaroscuro of the original painting, but I hope you will appreciate this humble shadow of the artist’s vision. This version of *Incredulity of Saint Thomas* also happens to be a shadow of the maestro, one of the earliest replicas. I could not help myself and had to succumb to the compulsion of ridding my mind of this particular image that you so eagerly painted for me in your last letter. Indulge me and, please, imagine that the Thomas from this scene sliced the skin himself only moments before and plunged his fingers into the delicate viscera. *Nec spe, nec metu* , as Caravaggio’s companions used to be described. Without hope, without fear. I had the curators drag this painting out of storage for me to meditate on the shadows splayed over the planes of muscle and tissue. A morbid pleasure that only art can yield.

Tell me Will, can you feel the phantom touch deep down in your belly? Paint me another picture.

X

***

So I’m no longer a saint in this game of ours, now promoted to become the murdered saviour. Touching. And how ironic of you to settle for being a copycat of a copycat here. And really—Caravaggio? An artist and a murderer? I’m more and more curious where this is heading. You know very well no flame touched your sketches.

Are *you* without hope? Every letter you type, every line in your sketches screams *desperate hope* at me. You speak of darkness on the painting, but you surely can’t ignore the light clinging to that same muscle and tissue. Even the digital reproduction shows how luminous it is among the dark patches. And yes, I can feel the phantom slide of that finger, curiously probing at my insides. I wonder what that says about me, I leave it to you.

Here’s another picture, then. Bodies found in various stages of decay tightly sealed in glass jars on a run-down estate in New England. Various ages, shapes, and genders, genuinely no pattern here. There was quite a stir once they were discovered, faintly reminiscent of the mushroom farm we investigated all this time ago. They were all folded like origami and left sealed in glass, as though to create their own ecosystems. “Just like moss in glass jars. You plant it, water it, and seal it forever,” Beverly told me. Her girlfriend makes them for a living. I wouldn’t have made the connection, I can’t remember when was the last time I had a houseplant. You would appreciate the elegance of the endeavour, the perfectly closed cycle of life and death, intertwined inside a finite space. All on display for everyone to see—indeed, the kind of morbid pleasure that only art can yield. Eternal suspension.

The jars were stored in a secluded garden and the killer has watched over them for decades, leaving them untouched. He’s an old man with dementia, hasn’t put anyone new into a jar for years now. I believe it was only the unfamiliar morbidity of the entire thing that brought our crowd to the case because no one has been in danger for a long time now. There was no chase. I was standing there, among the jars and could only retrace the echoes of their deaths, no usual vividness of the bloody theatre playing out in

front of me. It was almost peaceful to retrace the steps, to think back to the randomness of their selection far away from this place, to his confident moves when he folded them like dolls. The pop of the jar closing forever.

There you go. Paint me a picture as well. And stop complaining about my aftershave. I should be offended by it, but somehow you managed to make it flattering at the same time, so I'll let it slide.

In eternal suspension,

Will

***

(return address: PO Box in Milan)

Dearest Will,

How I wish to be able to stand there next to you and witness these echoes, but that particular teacup cannot ever come together again.

These glass jars have become singular, contained universes. Perfect domes cutting off the enclosed worlds from any outside stimuli. What a way to elevate the solipsism of human existence to the most literal of levels. I almost don't wish to know if the jars have been opened. Don't tell me. I'd prefer believing their enclosures have never been violated. Tell me, Will, have you imagined yourself folded under one of these domes? Observed the movement of the stars, Sun, Moon, and planets in their allotted paths across the celestial firmament?

I've had the pleasure of an almost daily pilgrimage to Pinacoteca di Brera to contemplate the quiet order in some of the old masters. I was hoping I could reply to your story with a sketch, but my muse hasn't been so kind as to provide a suitable inspiration. Instead, please enjoy my interpretation of the *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* . The mood in the artwork clearly mirrors some of my own feelings, still grieving what could now never be. Perhaps the details will amuse you, in spite of its sombre mood.

Once again, my thoughts stray into the realm of possible futures. I shall remain patient, yet eagerly awaiting your decision. My mind's eye lingers over the images of us walking these streets together, basking in the warmth of the sun-kissed stone—stairs, pavements, walls… Tasting the city and its timeless beauty. Our separation might give us perspective, but I'm less and less sure either of us is capable of truly freeing himself. You've said that already, graciously not comparing me to a stubborn stray. I've been mulling it over ever since, contemplating the faintest possibility of free will in this. But I'm afraid we are not our own any more.

X

P.S. I've recently relocated further north (see the new return address on the envelope).

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The afterimages of you have been my constant companions, so in a way you do accompany me to all those places. The version of you walking those suffocatingly charming streets cannot commune with the ghost haunting my mind, but perhaps one of our futures ensures some proximity of these two, however small.

You know that I have laid myself in these jars, in every single one of them. Folded myself and looked with my dead, unseeing eyes up at the night sky. I wondered if our stars were the same.

I often think about the price of our connection. And who's going to pay for it—us or the world? We're at a stalemate, but we both know it's temporary. I'm not sure if I'm still grieving what might have been, that particular well has dried up recently.

And the sketch? Good that you haven't demoted me to a saint again. It's not every day that I can see myself so gracefully deceased, as my mind often has lots of other colourful ideas, most of them less dignified. This one is almost like an especially peaceful crime scene and actually in a twisted, sort of roundabout way—it is. The way it's arranged, it compels you to focus on the most gruesome elements: limbs succumbed to rigor mortis and wounds like punctured cardboard. I had to look up the original online because I couldn't believe any artist in their right mind would have put seven dogs sitting around dead Jesus. And of course—of course I was right. Insert my endless sigh here.

Before we talk about any futures, there's still forgiveness to be given. I haven't forgiven you yet, you know. I may get there eventually, but so far the kaleidoscope of me slashing your throat or strangling you has not stopped spinning. Judging by your choice of imagery—you haven't completely let go of that yet, either. Despite your claim to the contrary.

In the meantime, humour me and tell me more about what you're up to. Have you had any old friends for dinner yet?

Violently,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

I'm grieving, so dinner parties are the last thing on my mind, although I sometimes think about suppers. You should see this one with me in Santa Maria delle Grazie, soon no one may be able to do so anymore. It's not as impressive as you'd expect, but there's a certain gravitas to its slow and visible decay.

It's troubling when art disintegrates slowly. It has none of the loud grandeur of a collapsing church roof, none of the suddenness of a canvas slashed with a knife. Most

people will tell you it's a great tragedy that da Vinci's love of innovation doomed this creation to being slowly taken away from us, but I'd disagree. There is certain elegance in it and a valuable lesson to be learned—the trick to aging gracefully is just resigning yourself to decay. Or better still: being excited for it. Are you excited, Will? I wish to preserve you forever. I also wish to watch you slowly decay.

Before I left Florence, I went to see another supper. Instead of food on plates, oil on canvas. It's in the refectory of the Santa Maria Novella museum, imitating its original function, typical for Florentine monasteries—the ultimate sustenance put over tables to be contemplated during meals. The nun who made it ensured the survival of her artwork, which the flaking paint in Santa Maria delle Grazie can only envy.

I hope these paragraphs sufficiently sketch the picture of what I've been up to. What kind of suppers I've been attending. I'm afraid there is no physical sketch to accompany my letter this time. I'd loathe to bore you with more ecclesiastical comparisons and no other ones come to mind.

You have my forgiveness. Do I have yours?

X

***

Walking into that dungeon to watch the flaking paint must have felt suffocating to you. I've heard you have to pass an airlock before you walk into *the* room. And when you're inside, there's nothing remarkable or artistic about it. Is it true? Does it feel like walking into somebody's moldy basement instead of into the house of one of the most cliche works of art in human history? Or does it feel like walking into a prison to gawk at a unique monstrosity? Have you imagined yourself behind an airlock?

All this sounds suspiciously tame for you. And untheatrical. It looks as though you've turned into a hermit after you separated yourself from your old life. I even started to search the local Italian press for news of bodies with crucial parts missing. I expected headlines announcing that someone was found deep in the woods with both cheeks symmetrically—surgically—carved out, their head impaled on a branch. Or something like that. One of them would read: "Area man turned into shish kebab" or something equally appalling. You'd be furious. But there's nothing, only your sad museum stories. Perhaps the self-flagellation comes in all sorts of flavours after all.

You said that betrayal and promise are two sides of the same coin, so what are you promising? If not revenge, then what will you do to me once you're done with grieving? Betrayal has nothing to do with promise anymore. Betrayal and forgiveness, however… I'm told they're best seen as something akin to falling in love. You're starting to feel inevitable, almost like hunger.

I'm going to paint you another picture then, maybe it will inspire you to sketch something outrageous again. Two families, killed in their homes, arranged in their own beds. Mirrors smashed, shards put into their eyes and mouths. I thought I was looking at photographs of people with their eyes and mouths scratched out. Erased and reflecting,

but I'm not yet sure what exactly. A stark contrast to the near-bucolic image from my last letter and we're truly on the clock now. There will be more, probably during the next full moon, judging by the pattern so far. Makes me feel almost nostalgic about your sounders, the office stinks of stress and insomnia. I can almost hear the ticking of your metronome as we're getting closer and closer to the next caesura.

I'm very close to forgiveness, not yet sure where that leads next.

Tentatively,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

I have imagined myself in a myriad of scenarios, basements behind glass doors included. I much prefer seeing fragile art behind them, even if others might deem such visions disappointing.

I see that you've been talking to our mutual friend. Send my regards to Bedelia, then. I do miss our conversations. That level of introspection must have felt painful even for you, but I was hoping you'd arrive there soon. We are both fallen men, Will. Conjoined and inevitable. And I am also capable of being tame.

It's the arrangement of the bodies that is the most striking to me. And the use of mirrors. He's using their eyes to see, possessing them in mockery of what one usually associates with being possessed by spirits. Or perhaps it is a celebration? It's much more difficult to interpret with solely your brief descriptions, but I'm enjoying the imagery nonetheless.

The other day I had the privilege of seeing a series of tapestries depicting the life of the Prophet Abraham, hence the topic of the attached sketch. The local museum has them on loan for a short period. Tapestries are particularly interesting pictures, made of threads and strings. The guard in the room with the *Sacrifice of Isaac* fell asleep, so I dared to brush my fingers against the corner of the tapestry, almost wishing I could see the other side of fabric—to reveal its threads like veins and tendons. When I touched the tapestry, I was mesmerised at the view of Abraham's hand trembling as it approached Isaac's throat. The knife shook in uncertainty. Do you think God told Abraham to kill Isaac because He intended to eat him? I hope you'll enjoy this interpretation of the scene.

Also, why would there be anything suspicious about a man with missing cheeks? I would suspect the ravens to have done it. Looking forward to seeing where your hunger leads you.

X

***

If I was talking to anybody else, I'd say, "No, of course not. The angel intervened in time." But why hide now when all cards are on the table and all veils have been lifted? Of course God wanted to devour him with all heavenly hosts witnessing the feast, with Abraham licking the hot and tangy blood off the knife. It's only appropriate that this time I'm Abraham in this little farce that you sketched me—doing the slicing to appease God. Do you think he was just a puppet in His bloody theatre or did God see the divinity in Abraham's potential? Saw kindred darkness in his little human head? I can see Him ripping off the remainder of Isaac's throat with His own teeth.

We're still due for another strike of the Tooth Fairy, as Freddie dared to call him. Still two weeks until the next full moon. I'm getting whiplash from the deja vu of circling him like we all thought we did with you. And then I opened the cage and squeezed my eyes shut instead of daring to watch you leave. He's not you, though. Small blessings.

You said once that you wanted to both preserve me and watch me decay. Well, I'd like to put you in a glass cage and see you pace its confines. Restless and deprived of your accursed freedom and superiority. Come down and join the rest of us mortals, see how tight it is to live among us peasants. Another page from the little colouring book of my mind.

Bedelia is surprisingly easy to talk to, doesn't take me for strolls down my cursed memory lane. Gets straight to the point and drives a spike into my eye socket. It's refreshing. Doesn't lie, but obfuscates, as she puts it herself. Amid all her fascinating smoke and mirrors, there's a wealth of what I could gleam about you. I hate and love how much real estate you take up in my mind. You once told me that your mind palace is formidable even by medieval standards, which perhaps explains why you take up so much in mine.

How presumptuous of you to assume we're *both* fallen. Not inaccurate, however. I'm loath to admit that I have fallen into and for all your poisonous bullshit. It's disturbing that I haven't even noticed when my nightmares made way for a whole new array of night terrors. You have to pay for the dirty dream I had about you last night.

Intimately,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

In other worlds, the angel intervenes in time, but not in all of them. I'd like to think that we live in the best of all possible worlds and in this one—I adore that he doesn't. If you want me to pay for my sins against your delicate flesh, you're only to name the price. I am, after all, both a wealthy and generous man.

Now that we are on the same page, let me sketch you another vision. Camille Claudel, *Vertumne et Pomone*. In this one, I am kneeling in front of you, as though emerging from the sea—born out of it and caught right by your arms. The waves foam around me,

swaying us both in deceptive calmness. It is often said about this piece that the lovers are connected as equals and both their minds and bodies unite. Don't you find it particularly interesting that in the Indian tale the scene references, the lovers have just been reunited after a long magic spell?

Milan seems emptier and emptier everyday without you in it. I might relocate soon.

Please tell me about the dream you had, I want to know every single detail, so that perhaps the same vision may pay me a visit some night.

X

***

I wake from my dreams as though a great weight is pulled off of me. I almost look for an incubus on my chest, slowly suffocating me. But aren't incubi supposed to visit those who sleep alone? How can I ever be alone with you constantly on my mind? You are my slaughterhouse, my killing floor, my morgue, and my final resting. I walk around with this poison inside me.

And yet this image you sketched… this reunion, rebirth, surrender. I tried to be more surprised, but I know that I've changed you. Not your devilish essence, but enough of your substance to warrant this kind of surrender. I'm touched. I waltzed into your life and you fell into my arms, certainly against your will. And darkness consumed us both.

In my dream, I had you over your old dining room table. I pushed you, face first onto the cool surface and you folded like a rag doll, a smirk fixed to your face. All the decorations and fine china fell around us, shattering and spilling on the floor. I put my hand between your shoulder blades to keep you down, and worked open all those absurd layers of yours. God, the noises you made, the subdued breaths of *oh yes* and *please* as my hands wandered all over your thighs. I've always wanted to touch your suit, feel the ridiculous fabric under my fingers. I ripped your pants in haste and sank my teeth into your neck, worked you wide open and ready for me. As I was about to bury myself inside you—I woke up. That's why you have to pay for this dream. Feels like an unfinished business.

A week until the full moon and I care less and less. I think about gutting him, squeezing his throat. I also think about leaving my badge in the office and hopping on a plane. I don't think about strangling you any more which is more bizarre than the alternative.

On days like this, I feel closest to my dogs—howling seems like the best choice because otherwise I'm powerless.

Helplessly,

Will

***

Dearest Will,

Dogs howling and barking reflect the sentiment most common for all of us—at the core of existence dwells an unspeakable malaise. The malaise you inflicted upon me was caused precisely by what I had asked you to do—telling me your dream. Now I'm left with all those delicious scenarios unravelling in front of my eyes, in anticipation where this path could lead us. There are, after all, exquisite dining tables here as well and the one at my current disposal is mahogany. Would that suffice?

But why stop there? We could desecrate so many places and surfaces. So many marble and wooden surfaces you can pin me against and watch me smirk and smirk and smirk at you.

Excuse my haste in sending you this, but I believe you are at a crossroads. Do consider a trip to Europe—soon. In another world I would have been immensely interested in the full moon artist from your tales, but I believe the time is right to cut the umbilical cord and let it all bleed out.

Instead of a sketch this time, here's a more realistic picture—let's meet in the foyer of my mind palace. I shall wait for you. I trust you know where it is, let your desire and hunger lead you.

X

End Notes

...aaaand then they met in the Norman Chapel in Palermo!

Thank you so much for reading! Kudos and comments keep me going :)

I know that Bedelia said those words about betrayal and forgiveness to Hannibal, but I'd like to think she'd also say them to Will at some point. And hey, Beverly is all safe and sound in this story, living with her florist girlfriend. Definitely not sliced and glued to a Plexiglas.

There's a ton of stuff that I borrowed from clever tweets and poems. Some of them can be found here, here, and here. And from Richard Siken.

The line about the sentence, punctuation, and death comes partially from the commentary to one of the episodes in season 2. Couldn't find it anywhere else, so I assume it's all Bryan Fuller.

All the links to the artworks Hannibal references are in the story itself, but here's the list as well:

Check out the last supper painted by Plautilla Nelli. For the Caravaggio copy, I imagine Hannibal going to the Uffizi. And for the Saint Sebastian sketch also to the Uffizi, but it'd be a slightly more reworked version—I like to think it'd resemble the Wound Man from the series/books, but from Perugino he'd copy the pose and remove the ropes. And for the Mantegna, Hannibal would go to the Pinacoteca in Milan. The stigmata on the painting really do look like holes in cardboard, but the painting is really stunning. Have a look at Camille Claudel's art, her sculptures are incredible. I imagined *the Sacrifice of Isaac* tapestry to have come from the Hampton Court collection, i.e. these attributed to Pieter Coeck van Aelst.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!